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ABSTRACT

This report presents the manner in which a systemic approach of combining standards, assessment, and accountability into a unified set of laws and regulations has been coming onto the state scene for the past 2 decades. A complete performance-based education accountability system includes four components: standards and assessment, multiple indicators, rewards, and sanctions. To help track the progress of evaluating performance-based assessment, a discussion of each of these four components, along with information on which ones are found in each state and whether they appear in law or regulation, is offered. The data were collected over a 6-month period in 1997. This information was designed to help policymakers see how their state compares to others in developing performance-based accountability systems, in judging what performance indicators states favor, in seeing who uses rewards and sanctions, and in knowing what effect state authority to control the school versus decentralization has on accountability systems. The text focuses on alignment issues, state patterns, complete systems, multiple indicators, the use of indicators, an analysis by locus of authority, and an analysis by models of governance. The nonalignment of system components, the issue of whether a component in regulation has the same legitimacy as a component in statute, and the absence of records are also explored. Two appendices offer information on a state's authority to control the schools and education governance in the 50 states. (RJM)

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EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS IN 50 STATES

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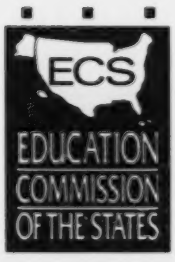

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Education Accountability Systems in 50 States

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INTRODUCTION

The systemic approach of combining standards, assessment and accountability into a unified set of laws and regulations — a "performance-based accountability system" — has been coming onto the state scene for the last 25 years.

In the early 1970s, the National Assessment of Educational Progress' move to criterion-referenced testing — which measures student performance against content standards — illustrated the need for more specific standards by which to gauge student achievement. Since then, states and the federal government have introduced a variety of measures to respond to public pressures to improve schools and increase student achievement. The rise of minimum competency testing, the development of stronger statewide standards and assessments, and the use of a multitude of indicators (such as the U.S. Department of Education's "wall chart" comparison of state test performance) eventually pushed states to add another element — the use of rewards and sanctions. In numerous states, schools and districts whose students exceed standards are eligible for rewards, while those whose achievement fall below the set standards may receive a variety of sanctions, including being declared "academically bankrupt."

The accountability circle is complete when teachers, students, building and district leaders have clear instructional goals (standards), when states and local districts have developed sound assessment techniques and quality indicators, and when visible consequences for all involved parties have been put into practice (rewards and sanctions).

A complete performance-based education accountability system, therefore, includes these four components: *standards and assessments, multiple indicators, rewards,* and *sanctions*. All four components may not exist in any one state, and any or all may occur in one of two ways — as a mandate from the state or as a piece of education policy and/or regulation.

This publication defines each of these components and discusses which ones are found in each state and whether or not they appear in law or regulation. It is designed to help policymakers see how their state compares to others in developing performance-based accountability systems, what performance indicators states favor, who uses rewards and sanctions, and what effect state authority to control the schools vs. decentralization has on accountability systems. (For more information on understanding and designing standards-based accountability systems, see the ECS publication, *Designing and Implementing Standards-Based Accountability Systems: A Policymaker's Guide*.)

EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS IN 50 STATES

Definitions of Components

Standards and assessments. Content or performance standards are written to provide clear expectations of what students must know and be able to do in designated subject areas at specific grade levels. The standards are coupled with assessments that measure how successful students are in meeting the standards.

Multiple indicators. An indicator measures either directly or indirectly the effect of a particular element on student achievement. Indicators include, for example, school or district "report cards," attendance and dropout rates, demographics and expenditures.

Rewards. A reward is granted to a teacher, school or district when student achievement exceeds the established standards or previously reported outcomes. These rewards are given for gains made; they are not given as grants or waivers to help schools work toward gains. Rewards are usually monetary.

Sanctions. If student achievement falls below levels set by the standards, or if student test scores continually fail to show gains, the state may apply sanctions against whole districts, or districts may apply sanctions against individual schools. Sanctions vary from a simple warning to intervention and take over by state officials.

State Components

The three tables that follow describe the general form of each state's accountability system. Table 1 shows which components a state has and whether they exist in statute or regulation. The word "None" indicates that the component does not exist or exists only in recommendation or publication form from the state department of education. Table 2 summarizes the information presented in Table 1, and Table 3 refers to statute numbers for those components found in state code.

Table 1: Accountability Components in Statute and Regulation

State	1 - Standards and Assessments	2 - Multiple Indicators	3 - Rewards	4 - Sanctions
AK	regulation	statute	none	none
AL	statute	statute	none	statute
AR	statute	statute	none	statute
AZ	regulation/statute	statute	none	none
CA	statute	statute	none	none
CO	statute	regulation	none	regulation
CT	none/statute	regulation	statute	statute
DE	regulation/statute	statute	none	none
FL	statute	statute	statute	statute
GE	statute	statute	statute	statute
HI	regulation	statute	none	none
IA	none	none	none	statute
ID	regulation	statute	none	none
IL	statute	statute	statute	statute
IN	statute	statute	statute	statute
KS	regulation	regulation	none	regulation

State	1 - Standards and Assessments	2 - Multiple Indicators	3 - Rewards	4 - Sanctions
KY	statute	statute	statute	statute
LA	statute	statute	none	statute
MA	statute	statute	none	statute
MD	statute	statute	statute	statute
ME	statute	regulation	none	none
MI	statute	statute	none	statute
MN	none/statute	none	none	none
MO	statute	statute	none	statute
MS	statute	regulation	none	statute
MT	none	none	none	none
NC	statute	regulation	statute	statute
ND	none	statute	none	none
NE	none	none	none	none
NH	statute	none	none	none
NJ	regulation	statute	statute	statute
NM	regulation/statute	statute	statute	statute
NY	regulation	statute	none	regulation
NV	statute	statute	none	statute
OH	regulation/statute	statute	none	statute
OK	regulation/statute	statute	none	statute
OR	statute	statute	none	statute
PA	regulation	statute	statute	none
RI	statute	statute	none	statute
SC	statute	statute	statute	statute
SD	statute	none	none	none
TN	regulation/statute	statute	none	statute
TX	statute	statute	statute	statute
UT	statute	statute	none	none
VA	statute	regulation	none	regulation
VT	statute	statute	none	statute
WA	statute	statute	statute	statute
WI	exec. order/statute	statute	none	none
WV	regulation/statute	statute	none	statute
WY	none	none	none	none

Table 2 below shows how many states have each of the individual components in place in statute or regulation, and how many do not. Also, since several of the states show standards in one place assessments in another, the table breaks out that component.

Table 2: Summary of Table 1 — Accountability Components in Statute and Regulations

Components	Standards	Assessments	Multiple Indicators	Rewards	Sanctions
In statute	28	38	36	14	29
In regulation	14	78	7	0	4
By executive order	1	0	0	0	0
None	7	54	7	36	17
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	50

The next table, Table 3, shows which components of a performance-based accountability system exist in current statute in each state and the statute number assigned to that component in code.

The table does not show components that exist only in state regulation and/or publications from state departments of education. For instance, more than 95% of states have or are developing content standards and accompanying assessments, but only those mandated by statute are included here.

In addition, indicators may occur separately in statute, as in state report cards or school profiles, or they may be listed within state statutes that govern sanctions or rewards. Wherever they occur, they are listed here only if they include some assessment of student achievement.

Rewards also must be based on some measure of student gain; most are monetary in nature. Waivers are included as rewards only if they are granted without the need of application and are awarded as a result of gains in student achievement. Most waivers are not rewards for achievement, but rather a way to assist a school or district attempting to raise student achievement with a new plan or program they are unable to operate under current regulation.

Finally, sanctions may occur in a separate statute or be included within the public school accreditation system. Sanctions are included here only if they are based on measures of student achievement.

Table 3: Statute References for Accountability Components

Key: * s - standards, a - assessments

State	*	Standards and Assessments	Multiple Indicators	Rewards	Sanctions
AK			§ 14.03.120		
AL	s a	§ 16-6B-1 § 16-6B-1	§ 16-6B-7		§ 16-6B-3
AR	s	§§ 6-15-401-407	§ 6-15-806		§ 6-15-418
AZ	a	§ 15-741	§ 15-743		
CA	s a	§ 60602 § 60602	§ 33126		
CO	s a	§ 22-53-407 § 22-53-409			
CT	a	§ 10-14n		§ 10-262l	§ 10-4b
DE	a	14 § 151-152	§ 124A (d)		
FL	s a	§ 233.011 (3)(a) § 232.2454	§ 229.575 (3)	§ 236.1228	§ 229.0535
GA	s a	§ 20-2-281 § 20-2-281	§ 20-2-282 (d)	§ 20-2-253	§ 20-2.282 § 20-2-283
HI			§ 296-92		
IA					§ 256.11 (11)(12)
ID			§ 33-4501		
IL	s a	§ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.64 § 105 ILCS 5/2-3.64	§ 105 ILCS 5/10-17A	§ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.25C	§ 105 ILCS 5/2-3.25F § 105 ILCS 5/34-8.3
IN	s a	§ 20-10.1-16-6 § 20-10.1-16-4	§ 20-1-1.2-6	§ 20-1-1.3-3	§ 20-1-1.2-9
KS					
KY	s	§ 158.6453	§ 158.6451	§ 159.6455	§ 158.6455
LA	s a	§ 17.391.3 § 17.391.3	§ 17.3911(B)		§ 17.391.10
MA	s	69 § 1I	69 § 1I		69 § 1J
MD	s a	§ 7-203 § 7-203.1	§ 5-202.2	§ 5-2.03.3	§ 5-202.2
ME	s a	§ 6209 § 6202			
MI	s a	§ 15.41278(2) § 15.41278(2)	§ 380.1204		§ 15.41280
MN	a	Laws of Minn. 1997, chap. 138			
MO	s a	§ 160.514 § 160.518	§ 160.522		§ 160.538
MS	a	§ 37-16-1			§ 37-17-6 § 37-17-13
MT					
NC	s a	§ 115C-105.3 §§ 115C-174.10-11		§ 115C-105.36	§§ 115C-105.37-39
ND			§ 15-47-51		
NE					
NH	s a	§ 193-C § 193-C			
NJ			§ 18A:7E-3	§ 18A:7F-29	§ 18A:7A-14
NM	a	§ 22-2-8.5	§ 22-1-6	§ 22-13A	§ 22-2-14 § 22-2-15

State	*	Standards and Assessments	Multiple Indicators	Rewards	Sanctions
NV	s a	Senate Bill 482 (1997) Senate Bill 482 (1997)	Senate Bill 482 (1997)		Senate Bill 482 (1997)
NY			NY CLS Educ @ 215-a		
OH	a	§ 3301 07 10	§ 3302 01		§§ 3302 03- 06
OK	a	§§ 1201 507-12	§ 1210 531		§ 1210 541 § 1210 542
OR	s a a	§ 329 045 § 329 485 § 335 160	§ 329 115		§ 334 217 § 342 173
PA			24 P S @ 25-2595	24 P S @ 25-2595	
RI	s a	§ 16--7 1-2 § 16-7 1-13	§ 16-604-4(22)		§ 16-7 1-5
SC	s a	§ 59-30-10 § 59-30-10	§ 59-18-30	§ 59-18-10	§ 59-18-30
SD	s a	§ 13-3-48 § 13-3-51			
TN	s a	§ 49-1-601 §§ 49-1-603-610	§ 49-1-601		§ 49-1-601 § 49-1-602
TX	s a	§ 39 021 § 39 022	§ 39 051 § 39 052	§ 39 091- 112	§ 39 131
UT	sa	§ 53A-1a-107 53A-1-601-610	§ 53A-3-602		
VA	s a	§ 22 1-253 13 1 § 22 1-253 13 3			
VT	s a	Sec 3 16 V S A § 164 Sec 3 16 V S A § 164	Sec 4 16 V S a § 165		§ 165-4 16-(7)(b)
WA	s a	§ 28A 630 885(3)(a) § 28A 630 885(3)(b)	§ 28A 320 205	§28A 630 885(3)(h)	§ 28A 630 885(3)(h)
WI	s a	executive order § 118 30	§ 115 38		
WV	a	§ 18-2E-1a	§ 18-2E-4		§ 18-2E-5
WY					

Alignment Issue

The existence of the various components of an accountability system does not mean they are aligned with one another or make up a coherent accountability package. For instance, an indicator such as a state report card or school profile may have been placed in statute up to 10 years before the state mandated standards and/or assessments. Also, in many cases, state assessments are based on early curriculum frameworks, not current content standards, or are not aligned with state curriculum or standards.

In addition, though based on measures of student achievement, sanctions may be part of a school accreditation system enacted well before other components. They may have a separate set of indicators or may include indicators not tied to student achievement. When that is the case, the sanctions may not be aligned with newer statutes or regulations concerning standards or rewards.

State Patterns

Table 4 below shows which patterns of the four components of a performance-based accountability system states use. This table uses only the components found in *statute*, it does not include those found in regulation or other locations. The numbers in the first column indicate how many of the four components a state's accountability system has, and the second lists the components by number — 1 - standards/assessments, 2 - multiple indicators, 3 - rewards, 4 - sanctions. For example, Arizona, California, Delaware, Utah and Wisconsin use two components mandated in statute — standards/assessments and multiple indicators. States labeled "1-2-4" use three components — standards/assessments, multiple indicators and sanctions.

Table 4: State Component Patterns

Key: 1 - standards and assessments, 2 - multiple indicators, 3 - rewards, 4 - sanctions

COMPONENTS		STATES
Number of components in state accountability system	Pattern of components	
0	0	Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming
1	1	Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Virginia
1	2	Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, New York, North Dakota
1	4	Iowa
2	1-2	Arizona, California, Delaware, Utah, Wisconsin
2	1-4	Mississippi
2	2-3	Pennsylvania
3	1-2-4	Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia
3	1-3-4	Connecticut, North Carolina
4	2-3-4	New Jersey
4	1-2-3-4	Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, New Mexico, South Carolina, Texas, Washington

Complete Systems

As seen in the last row of the table above, 10 states have complete performance-based systems in statute, having all four of the necessary components — standards/assessment, multiple indicators, rewards and sanctions. But again, the danger exists that the components are not aligned with one another. A careful reading of statute numbers is the best indicator of possible alignment. If the numbers are in sequence, or come from the same section, the system is probably aligned; Texas is an excellent example of this. If one or more of the numbers appears random, the separate components may not form a complete system and may have been placed in code as many as 10 years apart.

As Table 4 shows, only four states have no components of an accountability system in statute (Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming). Kansas, however, has three of the four components in regulation, a system considered by that state to be very effective. When regulation is considered, the number of states having a complete system jumps from 10 to 14.

Multiple Indicators

Multiple indicators is the component that links standards and assessments to rewards and sanctions. Because these indicators are both varied and numerous, they are presented in a separate table below, Table 5. The indicators listed were gathered from statute, regulation and state department of education documents. The five states (Alabama, Hawaii, Idaho, New York, North Dakota) that have multiple indicators as their only accountability component most likely require a "report card" to the public.

As noted previously, indicators listed are either measures of gains in student achievement or are elements perceived to influence those gains. They have two primary functions. First, the state education department uses the indicators to analyze whether school improvement goals have been met. Second, the state may use them to determine whether a district or school qualifies for a reward or if the state needs to apply a sanction for low performance.

The four main categories of indicators used for the chart below relate to: (1) students, for example, assessment scores, diversity, dropout rate and truancy; (2) professional staff, including attendance, experience and salary levels; (3) program, for instance, curriculum, climate and parent involvement; and (4) expenditures and use of resources, which includes per-pupil expenditure. Though items in the last three categories are not immediate indicators of gains in student achievement, they are perceived by educators, legislators and researchers as having a direct relationship to student achievement.

Table 5: Alaska - Kentucky

INDICATORS:	AK	AL	AR	AZ	CA	CO	CT	DE	FL	GA	HI	IA	ID	IL	IN	KS	KY
Student:																	
Assessment scores	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
ACT and/or SAT scores					x		x							x	x		
Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered scores					x										x		
Attendance	x	x	x				x	x						x	x	x	x
Class size							x							x	x		
Demographics							x	x		x	x		x		x	x	
Discipline			x		x			x	x				x		x	x	
Diversity				x	x		x			x							
Dropout rate		x	x	x	x		x		x	x			x	x		x	x
Enrollment	x				x		x			x							
Expulsion rate									x						x	x	
Graduation rate	x	x		x						x				x	x	x	
Retention rate	x		x														x
Student/administrator ratio								x						x			
Student/teacher ratio							x	x						x			
Suspension rate									x						x	x	
Transition		x	x	x	x		x			x					x		x
Truancy								x						x			
Professional Staff:																	
Attendance							x										
Diversity																	
Evaluation					x								x				
Experience							x										
Leadership					x								x				
Preparation																	
Reduction of class size & teaching load					x								x				
Salary levels														x			
Staff development					x								x			x	
Working in area of certification					x								x				
Program:																	
Curriculum					x			x					x				
Learning climate					x											x	
Mission and/or goals statement								x					x				
Parental and/or community involvement	x							x						x		x	
Expenditures and Use of Resources:			x		x		x	x		x	x		x	x		x	

Table 5: Louisiana - Nevada

INDICATORS:	LA	MA	MD	ME	MI	MN	MO	MS	MT	NC	ND	NE	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NV
Student:																	
Assessment scores	x	x	x	x	x		x			x	x			x	x	x	x
ACT and/or SAT scores	x										x			x	x		
AP courses: offered scores															x		
Attendance	x	x	x	x			x			x	x			x			x
Class size	x	x												x			x
Demographics	x									x							
Discipline																	x
Diversity										x	x						
Dropout rate	x	x	x	x			x							x	x		x
Enrollment		x		x			x				x			x	x	x	
Expulsion rate	x	x		x													x
Graduation rate	x										x			x		x	
Retention rate					x												
Student/administrator ratio							x										
Student/teacher ratio	x	x					x				x			x			x
Suspension rate	x	x															x
Transition							x				x			x	x	x	
Truancy		x															x
Professional Staff:																	
Attendance	x													x			
Diversity		x		x													
Evaluation		x															
Experience				x			x				x						
Leadership																	
Preparation				x			x				x					x	x
Reduction of class size & teaching load																	
Salary levels				x						x	x						
Staff development							x				x					x	
Working in area of certification	x																
Program:																	
Curriculum	x	x			x						x						x
Learning climate																	
Mission and/or goals statement															x		
Parental and/or community involvement					x		x								x		x
Expenditures and Use of Resources:	x	x					x			x	x			x	x	x	x

Table 5: Ohio - Wyoming

INDICATORS:	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX	UT	VA	VT	WA	WI	WV	WY
Student:																
Assessment scores	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
ACT and/or SAT scores				x					x	x		x				
AP courses: offered											x					
scores										x		x		x		
Attendance	x	x			x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Class size												x	x		x	
Demographics			x		x							x	x			
Discipline		x														
Diversity										x	x					
Dropout rate	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Enrollment										x		x	x		x	
Expulsion rate													x	x		
Graduation rate	x	x	x						x				x	x		
Retention rate												x	x	x		
Student/administrator ratio															x	
Student/teacher ratio									x	x		x			x	
Suspension rate		x			x								x	x		
Transition		x												x	x	
Truancy														x		
Professional Staff:																
Attendance					x											
Diversity			x													
Evaluation																
Experience			x							x					x	
Leadership																
Preparation																
Reduction of class size & teaching load																
Salary levels																
Staff development																
Working in area of certification																
Program:																
Curriculum																
Learning climate																
Mission and/or goals statement					x								x			
Parental and/or community involvement		x			x											
Expenditures and Use of Resources:			x						x	x		x	x	x	x	

Use of Indicators

Seven of the indicators are used by 16 or more states. They are:

- Assessment scores (40 states)
- Student behavior (includes discipline, truancy, expulsion and/or suspension) (16 states)
- Dropout rate (31 states)
- Student attendance (28 states)
- Expenditures and use of resources (includes per-pupil expenditure) (25 states)
- Graduation rate (17 states)
- Transition (education or employment after high school graduation) (16 states).

Assessment scores, the first indicator in the student category and the one states use most frequently to indicate gains in student achievement, are also one of the most complicated indicators. Various types of assessments are used to collect the student test scores reported in this subcategory, including, but not limited to, norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, performance assessments and portfolios.

Scores from these tests may be used separately or in combination to analyze gains. Current year's scores may be compared to the previous year's or years' data, using national norms or state standards, whichever is applicable. The comparisons formed may be between individual classes at specified grade levels, between buildings within a district or between districts.

Comparing individual student scores gives the most accurate data on student gains but is used less frequently than group comparison. Tracking individual student progress is more expensive than group comparisons and is becoming increasingly difficult because of the mobile nature of the American population. While it seems reasonable to compare last year's 4th-grade scores with this year's 5th-grade scores, this year's 5th graders may not be the same children as last year's 4th graders. Shifts in employment and other factors can cause drastic changes in student populations. Accurate tracking even within state borders is cumbersome, time consuming and can be prohibitively expensive. Only four states mandate the collection of data on student mobility — Alaska, Colorado, Illinois and Nevada, states that seem to have little in common.

Using two years of assessment data may give a fairer picture of gains in student achievement when using group comparisons for allocating rewards and sanctions in an accountability system.

Analysis by Locus of Authority

Patterns within the data begin to emerge as structures of state education governance are applied. Descriptions and data from the ECS *Clearinghouse Note* entitled "State Authority To Control the Schools" were used to analyze the data by locus of authority. Table 6 defines the categories of centralized, moderately decentralized and decentralized state authority.

Table 6: State Authority to Control the Schools

This table describes the various degrees of state control as defined by state laws and constitutions.

CENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING	***MODERATELY DECENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING***	***DECENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING***
Typical features: • Statewide prescription of course of study and textbook adoption • State code narrow or restrictive: unless local district is given authority, it is presumed not to have authority.	Typical features: • State boards and chief state school officers have some authority over curriculum • Long-standing, high stakes test (i.e., New York Regents exam or minimum competency testing, etc.) • Elected chiefs/more authority of chief state school officer.	Typical features: • Allocation of authority favors local discretion • Legislative mandates (i.e., courses) significant but not overwhelming • Curricular requirements listed in statute without specifics as to amount of time to be devoted to each course • Classification of grade structure left mostly to local districts (i.e., grouping schemes, standards for promotion, grade and grade-level placement) • State agency has no real statutory power to control local education program; is there to "assist districts" • Modest relationship between weak state authority over curriculum and appointed chief state school officer.

Other areas that may influence: Collective bargaining (policy trust agreements, etc.), special education, bilingual education, charter schools/choice, revision of state education code, finance litigation or other general litigation, state constitutions.
Source: ECS Information Clearinghouse revisions of 1976 classification done by Tyll van Geel, *Authority to Control the School Program*. Note: Intent of this chart is not to imply that any one classification is better/worse than another. See Appendix A for states listed under each category and the component pattern for each state.

Table 7 groups states by degree of centralization and shows how many components of a performance-based accountability system are common to each group of states. There are 17 centralized states, 10 moderately decentralized states and 23 decentralized states. The percentages are calculated by taking the number of states with each set of components divided by the total number of states in that category.

Table 7: Frequency of Components in Statute by Degree of State Control

Number of Components	Centralized - 17	Moderately Decentralized - 10	Decentralized - 23
Four	6 - 35%	1 - 10%	3 - 13%
Three	6 - 35%	5 - 50%	6 - 26%
Two	4 - 24%	1 - 10%	2 - 9%
One	1 - 6%	3 - 30%	8 - 35%
Zero	0 - 0%	0 - 0%	4 - 17%

The extremes presented by Table 7 are obvious. Thirty-five percent of the centralized states have an education accountability system with all four components, about three times the percentage in either moderately decentralized or decentralized states. Twenty-six percent of the decentralized states have no performance-based accountability components in statute, while the percentage stands at zero for the other two categories.

Other trends noticeable in this table include:

- Centralized states have more systems with four components and two components than any other category.
- Moderately decentralized states favor systems with three components, usually choosing not to include rewards.

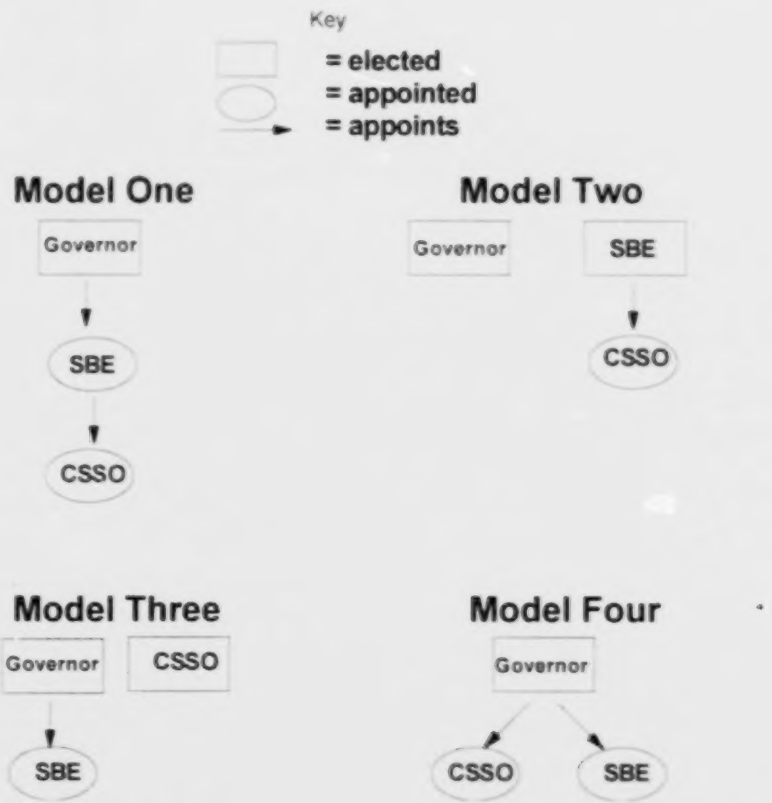
In general, the majority of states with complete accountability systems are those with centralized authority to control schools. Where states are decentralized or have local control of authority, nearly half have only one or none of the four components. The struggle between centralized government and local control has indeed had an impact on the creation and growth of performance-based accountability systems.

Analysis by Models of Governance

Governance structure models (see Figure 1 below) developed by Campbell and Mazzoni also were used to analyze the use of performance-based accountability systems (see Appendix B for more information). These four models focus on the policymaking components of the state education agency — the chief state school officer (CSSO) and the state board of education (SBE) — and on the formal links between these roles and the governor's office.

Figure 1

Basic Models of Education Governance



No particular trends were evident when Models 2 and 4 were compared with whether a state was decentralized, moderately decentralized or centralized. There were, however, some interesting trends when similar comparisons were made using Models 1 and 3. These comparisons are detailed in the tables and analyses below.

Model 3 is defined by an elected chief state school officer and governor, with the governor appointing the state board of education. It is the only model in which the chief is elected.

Table 8: COMPARISON — Model 3 Governance Structure and Locus of Authority

Key: 1 - standards and assessments, 2 - multiple indicators, 3 - rewards, 4 - sanctions

Centralized			Moderately Decentralized			Decentralized		
State	Statute	Statute/ Regulation	State	Statute	Statute/ Regulation	State	Statute	Statute/ Regulation
Arizona	1-2	1-2	California	1-2	1-2	Idaho	2	1-2
Georgia	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4	Oklahoma	1-2-4	1-2-4	Montana	0	0
Indiana	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4	Oregon	1-2-4	1-2-4	N. Dakota	2	2
N. Carolina	1-3-4	1-2-3-4				Wyoming	0	0

Three things are noticeable in Table 8. First, the number of components states use in an accountability system is directly related to how centralized or decentralized the education system is. Second, centralized states using this model tend to have complete systems with four components. Third, moderately decentralized states all have three-component systems with rewards as the missing component. Finally, decentralized states tend to have no accountability system.

Model 1, as analyzed in Table 9, is defined by an elected governor appointing the state board of education, which, in turn appoints the chief state school officer. It is the only one of the four models in which the chief is appointed by an appointed board of education.

Table 9: COMPARISON — Model 1 Governance Structure and Locus of Authority

Key: 1 - standards and assessments, 2 - multiple indicators, 3 - rewards, 4 - sanctions

Centralized			Moderately Decentralized			Decentralized		
State	Compo-nents in Statute	Compo-nents in Statute/ Regulation	State	Compo-nents in Statute	Compo-nents in Statute/ Regulation	State	Compo-nents in Statute	Compo-nents in Statute/ Regulation
Arkansas	1-2-4	1-2-4				Alaska	2	1-2
Delaware	1-2	1-2				Connecticut	1-3-4	1-2-3-4
Kentucky	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4				Illinois	1-2-3-4	1-2-3-4
West Virginia	1-2-4	1-2-4				Maryland Massachusetts	1-2-3-4 1-2-4	1-2-3-4 1-2-4
						Missouri	1-2-4	1-2-4
						New Hampshire Rhode Island	1 1-2-4	1 1-2-4
						Vermont	1-2-4	1-2-4

Three things are again noticeable in Table 9. First, as in Table 8, the number of components used in an accountability system is directly related to the locus of authority in states using Model 1. With this model, however, centralized states predominately use components 1-2-4 — standards/assessments, multiple indicators and sanctions — with rewards the missing component. Decentralized states not only

use the 1-2-4 structure, but two also have complete systems. Finally, there are no moderately decentralized states that use Model 1 as a governance structure.

The comparisons show a fairly logical connection. Model 3 is a tightly controlled structure with two elected officials holding power over an appointed board, thereby centralizing the power. States that have a centralized locus of control logically would move toward completion of an accountability system more quickly using this model.

Model 1 is a more loosely controlled structure with an elected governor appointing a board that in turn appoints the chief state school officer. Power is diffused through a larger number of people at the top of this structure, so states with a decentralized locus of authority logically would move toward a complete system using this model. The progress toward a complete system may not be as quick as in centralized states using Model 3, however, because decentralized states are more dedicated to the philosophy of local control and would not tend to move toward a state accountability system quickly no matter which governance model is in place.

CONCLUSION

Data for this project were collected over a period of six months in spring 1997. After searching statute books, online databases and state World Wide Web sites, researchers made phone calls to state departments of education in 28 states to check data or secure more information that would make each state profile as accurate as possible in Tables 1 and 3.

These phone calls brought a human aspect to both the details and patterns that the tables display. In all cases, individuals contacted seemed genuinely proud of education in their states and were looking forward to changes that would improve the education provided to their citizens. They also spoke about three problematic items that also became more apparent as the data were analyzed. Those problems were: (1) the nonalignment of system components, (2) the differences resulting from placing some components in statute and others in regulation, and (3) the absence of rewards in many accountability systems.

Nonalignment of System Components

The issue of nonalignment presented itself both in data analysis and in phone conversations with state superintendents, state education department staff and experts connected with state legislatures. First, systems that seemed to be complete in the data showed weaknesses when statute number sequence was analyzed. Careful reading of the statute showed that in some cases, multiple indicators were from a previous report card system, sanctions were tied to a previously existing accreditation system based on inputs rather than outcomes of student learning, or what appeared to be standards was simply the original mandate for curriculum frameworks or basic required curricula for graduation.

Also, in many cases, the state testing system was not yet in line with new state content standards. If these systems are not aligned, they become confusing and cumbersome for educators at all levels who must implement and use them.

Statute vs. Regulation

The differences caused by placing some components in statute and others in regulation may prove to be minimal. Having to search both state code and regulation to complete the data collection proved to be both difficult and confusing. Many phone conversations centered around this issue, although confusion was usually resolved with one or two contacts in each state.

In talking with an education department staff person in Kansas, a state whose system is all in regulation, this question finally surfaced: "Do components in regulation have the same 'teeth' as components in statute?" Accountability systems are complex and costly, and if the power to implement and maintain the system is not present, even a well-planned system could prove ineffective. The Kansas staffer observed that in that state, *where* the accountability system was placed did not seem to be an issue. All Kansas school districts are in compliance with the system, and there have been no court challenges. Kansas has a decentralized locus of authority. Are regulation and statute power perceived in the same way within states that are moderately decentralized or centralized?

Absence of Rewards

Finally, rewards appear to be the absent component in many state accountability systems. There are 10 states with complete (1-2-3-4) systems, aligned and unaligned. If the systems described as 1-2-4 were to

add rewards, nearly half of the states would have complete systems. Several problems exist, however, in the creation of this component.

First, experts disagree on whether incentives and rewards are effective in public education. They often produce changes in behavior and practice, but there is question as to whether these changes are permanent or transitory.

Second is the issue of fairness. Rewards must be based on indicators that are valid and reliable. They also must be awarded and disseminated in a manner that is perceived as fair by all those eligible for the rewards.

Finally, there is the issue of trust. A reward is somewhat like holding a carrot in front of a horse. What happens when the carrot disappears? The reward component and the initial appropriation of funds must be sustained over time if educators are to perceive rewards as useful and valuable.

People in several states shared information and opinions about rewards in phone conversations. The component is being considered in many of the states that have a 1-2-4 system, but the words state officials used to describe how the process was proceeding were "carefully" and "cautiously." In many ways, the other three components in an accountability system deal with students. The rewards component deals directly with adults, particularly with teachers. People in many states, including California and New York, said they are working on the issue.

Questions for Future Study:

1. How does the governance structure of a state affect creation of an education accountability system?

2. What factors or characteristics of a state, including governance models and locus of control, affect the design of these systems?

3. How is implementation of an accountability system affected by these factors or characteristics?

4. If system components are aligned, that is, if they use the same measures of student learning, do educators perceive them to be more equitable?

5. Are systems where all components are fully aligned more successful in improving student achievement than nonaligned systems?

APPENDIX A

State Authority to Control the Schools

This table more fully describes the various degrees of state control as defined by state laws and constitutions.

Key: 1 - standards and assessments, 2 - multiple indicators, 3 - rewards, 4 - sanctions

CENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING	***MODERATELY DECENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING***	***DECENTRALIZED DECISIONMAKING***	
Typical features: • Statewide prescription of course of study and textbook adoption • State code is narrow or restrictive: unless local district is given authority, it is presumed not to have authority.	Typical features: • State boards and chief state school officers have some authority over curriculum • Long-standing, high stakes test (i.e., New York Regents exam or minimum competency testing, etc.) • Elected chiefs/more authority of chief state school officer.	Typical features: • Allocation of authority favors local discretion • Legislative mandates (i.e., courses) significant but not overwhelming • Curricular requirements listed in statute without specifics as to amount of time to be devoted to each course • Classification of grade structure left mostly to local districts (i.e., grouping schemes, standards for promotion, grade and grade-level placement) • State agency has no real statutory power to control local education program; is there to "assist districts" • Modest relationship between weak state authority over curriculum and appointed chief state school officer.	
Alabama 1-2-4	California 1-2	Alaska 2	Montana 0
Arizona 1-2	Hawaii 2	Colorado 1	Nebraska 0
Arkansas 1-2-4	Maine 1	Connecticut 1-3-4	New Hampshire 1
Delaware 1-2	Michigan 1-2-4	Idaho 2	North Dakota 2
Florida 1-2-3-4	Nevada 1-2-4	Illinois 1-2-3-4	Ohio 1-2-4
Georgia 1-2-3-4	New Jersey 2-3-4	Iowa 4	Pennsylvania 2-3
Indiana 1-2-3-4	New York 2	Kansas 0	Rhode Island 1-2-4
Kentucky 1-2-3-4	Oklahoma 1-2-4	Maryland 1-2-3-4	South Dakota 1
Louisiana 1-2-4	Oregon 1-2-4	Massachusetts 1-2-4	Vermont 1-2-4
Mississippi 1-4	Texas 1-2-3-4	Minnesota 1	Washington 1-2-3-4
New Mexico 1-2-3-4		Missouri 1-2-4	Wisconsin 1-2
North Carolina 1-3-4			Wyoming 0
South Carolina 1-2-3-4			
Tennessee 1-2-4			
Utah 1-2			
Virginia 1			
West Virginia 1-2-4			

Other areas that may influence: collective bargaining (policy trust agreements, etc.); special education; bilingual education; charter schools/choice; revision of state education code; finance litigation or other general litigation; state constitutions

Source: ECS Information Clearinghouse revision of 1976 classification done by Tyll van Geel, *Authority to Control the School Program*. Note: The intent of this chart is not to imply that any one classification is better/worse than another.

APPENDIX B

Education Governance Structures in the 50 States

States that conform to a basic model:

MODEL ONE (13 states)	MODEL TWO (8 states)	MODEL THREE (11 states)	MODEL FOUR (8 states)
Alaska	Alabama	Arizona	Iowa
Arkansas	Colorado	California	Maine
Connecticut	Hawaii	Georgia	Minnesota
Delaware	Kansas	Idaho	New Jersey
Illinois	Michigan	Indiana	Pennsylvania
Kentucky	Nebraska	Montana	South Dakota
Maryland	Nevada	North Carolina	Tennessee
Massachusetts	Utah	North Dakota	Virginia
Missouri		Oklahoma	
New Hampshire		Oregon	
Rhode Island		Wyoming	
Vermont			
West Virginia			

States that do not conform to the basic model:

Florida — The state board of education (SBE) consists of seven elected cabinet members: the governor, secretary of state, attorney general, comptroller, treasurer, commissioner of agriculture and chief state school officer (CSSO).

Louisiana — Eight state board members are elected, and the governor appoints three members. The SBE appoints the CSSO.

Mississippi — The governor appoints five SBE members, while the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house each appoint two members. The SBE appoints the CSSO.

New Mexico — Ten SBE members are elected, and the governor appoints five. The SBE appoints the CSSO.

New York — The state legislature elects SBE members, and the SBE appoints the CSSO.

Ohio — State board is a hybrid, with 11 members elected and eight appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate.

South Carolina — Legislative delegations elect 16 SBE members, and the governor appoints one SBE member. The CSSO is elected.

Texas — The SBE is elected, and the governor appoints the CSSO.

Washington — Local school boards elect SBE members, and the CSSO is elected by the citizenry.

Wisconsin — There is no SBE, and the CSSO is elected.

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